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RECORD GST MOP-UP IN MARCH '21 AS COLLECTIONS TOUCH ₹1.24L-CR

The revenue crossed the ₹1-lakh-crore mark for the 6th straight month. This month's tally is 27% above the March '20 collection

HIGHEST SINCE INTRODUCTION OF GST

Of the total revenue, Central GST stood at ₹22,973 crore, State GST was ₹29,329 crore, integrated GST accounted for ₹62,842 crore (including ₹31,097 crore collected on import of goods) while cess amounted to ₹8,757 crore (including ₹935 crore on import of goods). The finance ministry said March's figures are the highest since the introduction of GST

MARKER OF POST PANDEMIC RECOVERY?

- The steady increase in GST collections over the past six months could be a marker of rapid economic recovery post pandemic
- Closer monitoring against fake-billing, deep data analytics using data from multiple sources and effective tax administration have also contributed to the increase in GST revenue | P12

₹58,852 cr

REVENUE OF CENTRE AND STATES FOR CGST; THE EARNING IS ₹60,559 CRORE FOR SGST

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARWAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Sporadic incidents of violence reported elsewhere in West Bengal also; voting percentage high in Assam Phase II

NANDIGRAM DRAMA, VIOLENCE MARK BIG TURNOUT IN W BENGAL

FIGURES THAT MATTER

WEST BENGAL
80.43% polling in Bengal's 30 Assembly constituencies, including Nandigram

10,620 ballot units and an equal number of control units and VVPATs used in Bengal

ASSAM
77.21% in Assam's 39 Assembly constituencies

10,819 ballot units, 10,592 control units and as many VVPATs used in Assam

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at a polling station during the second phase of Assembly polls at Boyal in Nandigram on Thursday | PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Kolkata/Guwahati

A high voter turnout of 80.43 pc and 77.21 pc was recorded in West Bengal and Assam, respectively, on Thursday but the highlight of the second phase of polling was the high drama in Nandigram, followed by Mamata Banerjee accusing the BJP of rigging the polls and the Election Commission of inaction. Sporadic violence was reported in other parts of Bengal, too, as voting took place in 30 assembly constituencies spread over East and West Midnapore, Bankura and South 24 Parganas districts. In Assam, polling for 39 seats across 13 districts was largely peaceful, barring one incident.

Pitted against her aide-turned-rival Suvendu Adhikari, the Bengal chief minister rushed to booth no. 7 at Boyal in Nandigram claiming she had received complaints that TMC's polling agents were not allowed at the polling station. As she argued with senior police officers, BJP supporters assembled outside and raised *Jai Sri Ram* slogans. A group of TMC supporters, too, gathered and shouted *Khela Hobe*. As the two groups clashed, hurling stones and trading abuses, Mamata called up Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and alleged that bogus voting was taking place on a massive scale while central force remained mute spectators.

The TMC chief wrote a complaint letter to the Election Commission, accusing it of inaction on 63 complaints lodged by her party, and threatened to move court. She accused the central forces and the EC of acting at the behest of Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The poll panel, however, cited its general observer's report to state that there was no disruption in voting at polling station number 7. Despite her allegations of poll fraud, Mamata claimed victory even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi took potshots at her saying "Your body language is showing you have accepted your defeat in Nandigram". P9

After SOS calls from candidates and PMO stinker, savings rate cut nixed

ANURADHA SHUKLA @ New Delhi

THE Finance Ministry on Thursday rescinded its controversial order slashing interest rates on small savings within 12 hours of issuing it, following social media backlash, panic calls from BJP functionaries of poll-bound states, and a sharply worded directive from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

On Wednesday evening, the ministry had issued an order cutting interest rates applicable on various small savings schemes by 50-110 basis points for April-June 2021 period.

The decision, announced a day before phase-2 voting in Bengal and Assam, drew widespread criticism. Sources said some BJP candidates, too, made calls to the PMO.

West Bengal contributes the most to small savings, according to National Savings Institute data. Of the total gross small savings collections of ₹5.96 lakh crore in FY18, collections from West Bengal were ₹90,000 crore.

Early on Thursday morning, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman took it upon herself to do damage control. "The interest rates of small savings schemes will continue to be the same as in the last quarter of 2020-21. Orders issued by oversight shall be withdrawn," she tweeted.

Sources said the order was supposed to be made public next week but got out early due to "bureaucratic error". "As it was financial year-end closing (March 31), the order went public. It has been corrected now," said an official.

State logs 11% jump in March GST revenue

RAMU PATIL @ Bengaluru

Despite the threat of a second wave of Covid-19 pandemic looming large, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection in Karnataka during March 2021 has been 11 per cent more compared to the same period last year.

In March 2020, the GST collection was Rs 7,144.30 crore, and it went up to Rs 7,914.98 crore last month, indicating a recovery in the economy and tax collection.

"Major growth in agriculture, industry, services sector and entrepreneurial skills are the reasons for more revenue collection in the state," Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who is also Karnataka's representative in the GST Council, told The New Indian Express on Thursday. According to him, the increase in tax collection shows efficient finance management by the government under the leadership of B S Yediyurappa, and the entrepreneurial prowess of the state.

Member of GST Consultative Committee, Government of Karnataka, B T Manohar, said the increase in GST revenue collection indicates effective tax administration, better compliance, enforcement, implementation of e-invoice and monitoring of e-way bills. CONTINUED ON: P4

Excise revenue too sees uptick

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

DESPITE a bleak financial year, the State Excise revenue for 2020-21 has increased by 7.17 per cent in comparison to the previous financial year of 2019-20. The Department has collected Rs 23,131.28 crore revenue against a Budget estimate of Rs 22,700 crore for the year 2020-21, registering an increase of Rs 1,547.33 crore over the previous financial year. The Excise revenue collection for 2019-20 was Rs 21,583.95 crore against a Budget estimate of Rs 20,950 crore.

The financial gains are being pegged to the two-time increase of the Additional Excise Duty across all slabs of Indian Made Liquor (IML) in May last year, soon after government allowed the re-opening of retail liquor stores and MSIL stores to mop up an additional Rs 2,500 crore revenue. CONTINUED ON: P4

Bengaluru loses its cool as Sun beats down

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

IF you have been feeling muggy over the last few days, it's because the mercury level in Bengaluru has been steadily climbing. On Wednesday (March 31), the city recorded a maximum temperature of 37.2 degrees Celsius, a mark which it had touched four years ago on March 26, 2017.

According to India Meteorological Department, the maximum temperature on March 30 this year, was 35.4 degrees Celsius and on April 1, it was 36.7 degrees Celsius.

Bengaluru had recorded an all-time high of 37.3 degrees Celsius on March 29, 1996. On March 8, 2018, the city recorded maximum temperature of 37 degrees Celsius and on March 31, 2020, it touched 36.1 degrees Celsius. P7

Karnataka now has 2nd highest number of active Covid-19 cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

STATE'S SECOND WAVE BATTLE

4,234 NEW CASES

18 NEW DEATHS

4.65% POSITIVITY RATE

- Karnataka crosses 10 lakh positive cases on Thursday with a tally of 10,01,238
- State will see 10.7 lakh positive cases by May 1 and 11.2 lakh by Sept 1, according to IISc researches

KARNATAKA now stands second among states with the highest number of active Covid-19 cases at 30,865, even as it crossed the 10 lakh-mark on Thursday with a tally of 10,01,238 cases since the start of the pandemic on March 8, 2020. Maharashtra, with 3,56,243 active cases — well over ten times Karnataka's figure — is at the top.

Karnataka first touched the one lakh-mark on September 10, 2020, with 1,01,537 active cases, and then again on September 16, 17 and 18. The numbers dipped for a few days before climbing back to the one lakh-mark and continuing from September 26 to October 21. On October 10 last year, the state recorded the highest number of active cases at 1,20,929 cases.

From then on, there had been a steady decline to just above the 7,000-mark in January third week this year, after which the numbers have been on the rise again due to the second wave.

As per data from the crowd-sourced website covid19india.org, 15,217 out of every 10 lakh people in Karnataka have tested positive for the virus, while for every 100 confirmed cases, three are currently infected. CONTINUED ON: P3

Vax drive on all days in April to enhance coverage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

ON a day the Covid-19 inoculation for all people above the age of 45 began, the Centre on Thursday said the shots would be given on all days, including gazetted holidays, throughout April at all public and private vaccination centres.

The decision seeks to arrest a steep decline in the number of people getting vaccinated against the backdrop of sharp rise in number of cases amid the outbreak of the second wave. Till Thursday, over 63 million people have been vaccinated, translating into just 4.5 doses per 100 people.

The fresh measure was recommended by the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration and was taken after deliberations with all states on Wednesday, the Health Ministry said. The rationale behind the decision is to optimally utilise all vaccination centres for increased coverage. P10

Drive goes off smoothly in Karnataka

Bengaluru: The vaccination drive for people aged above 45 went off smoothly in the state with no shortage of vaccines. In all, 50,620 people got the 1st dose of the vaccine, while 396 people got the second dose. P3

EXPRESS READ

Offline lessons for classes 6-9 suspended

Bengaluru: The state govt has decided to suspend offline lessons for students of classes 6 to 9 in Bengaluru due to the steep rise in Covid positive cases. On-campus classes for SSLC, PUC I and II students will continue | P2

CHARISMA, TALENT, EFFORT

...And the Phalke Award goes to Thalaivar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

THERE are superstars and then there is Rajinikanth. The stylish actor, born Shivajirao Gaekwad, who has earned himself a demi-God status with his inimitable on-screen mannerisms and performances, will be presented the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke Award, the highest honour for an artiste in Indian cinema, for the year 2019, on May 3.

Rajinikanth will be the fourth star from South Indian cinema after Akkineni Nageswara Rao, Sivaji Ganesan, and Dr Rajkumar to receive the Dadasaheb Phalke award. The actor now joins an illustrious list of film personalities to have been conferred this award, including his mentor K Balachander, Satyajit Ray, Amitabh Bachchan, Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, Gulzar, Lata Mangeshkar, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, and K Vishwanath.

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar, who made the announcement on Thursday, said, "A jury consisting of Asha Bhonsle, Mohanlal, Biswajit Chatterjee, Shankar Mahadevan and Subhash Ghai unanimously decided to nominate Rajinikanth for the award, and we have accepted the nomination. For the last 50-odd years, he has been the uncrowned king of cinema." CONTINUED ON: P7

ACTOR TWEETS

"My heartfelt thanks to the Central government, PM Modi, and Union Minister Prakash Javadekar and the jury for conferring upon me the prestigious award."

POLICE FLAG DAY
2nd APRIL, 2021
The day when we honour and salute our brave policemen
for their selfless service, courage, valour and dedication - Police Flag Day.
Tributes to the unwavering dedication to duty of our Police
Chief Guest
Sri B.S. Yediyurappa
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Presided By
Sri Basavaraj Bommai
Hon'ble Minister for Home, Law & Parliamentary Affairs
Date: 02.04.2021, Friday. Time: 08.00 AM
Venue: K.S.R.P. Parade Ground, Koramangala, Bengaluru
KARNATAKA STATE POLICE
POLICE FLAG DAY
02.04.2021
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and
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Police Welfare Fund
₹ 50, ₹ 100,
₹ 500, ₹ 1000, ₹ 2000
Wear Mask
Follow Physical Distancing
Maintain Hand Hygiene
karnataka information
Dept. of Information and Public Relations